

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAMS: AFGHANISTAN VS. IRAQ – SHOULD
WE HAVE A STANDARD MODEL?**

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ABSTRACT

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As the war in Iraq begins its fourth year of existence, the security situation has demonstrated remarkable progress. Within this more stable environment, the need for long term nation building is emerging. With the birth of a new government built on democratic principles, there is a significant requirement for assistance in the creation of institutions that will be enduring. One such interagency tool for providing this assistance is the creation of Provincial Reconstruction Teams. The current formula in Afghanistan is a military-centric organization, with significant Coalition participation, while the emerging concept in Iraq calls for a more balanced interagency approach led by the United States. This paper will examine the structure and accomplishments of Provincial Reconstruction Teams to date in Afghanistan, compare them to emerging initiatives in Iraq, and make recommendations for future planning and employment of US government assistance in a post-conflict environment.

PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAMS: AFGHANISTAN VS. IRAQ – SHOULD WE HAVE A STANDARD MODEL?

As the war in Iraq continues on into a fourth year, the security situation has demonstrated remarkable progress. Within this more stable environment, the need for long term capacity building is emerging. With the birth of a new government built on democratic principles, there is a significant requirement for assistance in the creation of institutions that will be enduring. As many dictatorial governments are replaced with those adopting democratic values, the need for assistance in creating transparent and participative governments which promote decentralized authority and endure overtime will continue to increase. As the world leader in democratic principles, United States must be ready to provide this assistance.

The United States doctrine for nation building continues to evolve. This paper will examine how the U.S. government organizes resources to assist failed states and emerging democracies. It will describe the base elements of nation building associated with post-conflict operations, and examine one of the most effective tools for establishing sound democratic institutions; Provincial Reconstruction Teams. The concept for these teams can be traced back to the Vietnam conflict and has recently evolved since early 2002 during Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, and continues to progress today in Operation Iraqi Freedom across Iraq. The paper will explore the unique elements of each program both in Afghanistan and Iraq, examine lessons learned today, and make recommendations to assist in the planning and execution of future situations requiring these skills.

Nation Building

Implicit with regime change as a result of the application of military power is the concept of nation building. We cannot simply take down a sovereign nation's ability to provide for its people without replacing it with some sort of functioning government, whatever its shape may be. While the task of this endeavor may be extremely complex, it must be taken into consideration prior to the onset of military operations. Even though the military force present may contain sufficient manpower and a multitude of skills to accomplish these tasks, an interagency and coalition effort, if possible, should be formed. There is no single definition of nation building. However, when associated with military operations, the following definition seems to apply best:

As most often used when referring to the U.S. military, nation building refers to a range of activities to assist civilians beyond providing security and humanitarian aid in emergency situations. These can include projects such as the repair, maintenance, or construction of economic infrastructure, such as roads, schools, electric grids, and heavy industrial facilities, and of health infrastructure, such as

clinics and hospitals, and water and sewage facilities. They can also include the provision of a variety of services, such as medical services to refugee and impoverished populations, and training and assistance to police, the military, the judiciary, and prison officials as well as other civil administrators.¹

The U.S. military is no stranger to the rebuilding of a nation following a conflict.

Unfortunately, with the exception of the post World War II reconstruction of Germany and Japan, the military efforts at nation building have been less than stellar. James Dobbins indicates in his study of our nation's involvement in nation building that there are multiple contributing factors to this lack of success, but the most logical explanation lies in the fact that Germany and Japan were already highly developed and economically advanced nations, and therefore, required fewer reforms than most of the other undeveloped and failing states that we have attempted to rebuild, such as Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo.² Perhaps one of the most significant factors for the military's lack of great success lies in its reluctance to plan for post-conflict operations. In many instances, the prevailing military thoughts are on defeating the enemy military forces as quickly as possible. More often than not, the reconstruction phase of an operation will last far longer than the decisive combat operations. Shortly after the Panama conflict, Richard Schultz interviewed General Maxwell Thurman, who shared his views of the XVIII Airborne Corps attitude toward post-conflict operations planning.

The warfighting elements are mainly interested in conflict termination as opposed to post-conflict restoration, which is admittedly a problem for us in the military establishment. If I had been the XVIII Corps commander, I might have very well said Blind Logic is going to be residual.... My task is to conduct the strike force operation and get out. I think the proclivity was to leave the fighting to the warfighter and the restoration to the people who were in country. SOUTHCOM should have been more attentive to the transition from one phase to the other, but I readily admit it was the last priority on my agenda at the time.³

Nation building has not been at the forefront of military planning, nor has it had widespread acceptance by United States officials. In December 1999, a Kosovo Force (KFOR) delegation testified before the NATO infrastructure committee concerning construction of additional military facilities in Kosovo. Prior to the briefing, the delegation was advised to avoid any reference to or use of the term "nation building". It was inferred that the U.S. representative on the NATO infrastructure committee would not support any construction programs that gave the impression of permanent facility improvement, or residual value to the government of Serbia. All construction was classified as temporary with minimum military specifications for a useful life of less than two years.⁴

The goal of any U.S. government endeavor taken abroad should be to achieve the strategic objectives formulated prior to any actions. The planning should consider all aspects of

national power and the role of each interagency organization. When military operations are necessary there needs to be coordinated planning for the transition from combat operations to stability and reconstruction. Aside from our past failings, we must plan for and develop skills specifically designed for post-conflict activities. Recognizing the need for consistent national policy, the National Security Council through the Principles Committee (PC) directed the formation of a Country Reconstruction and Stabilization Group (CRSG) in December 2004. This group serves as the primary interagency coordination body whenever the United States government has a need for post-conflict reconstruction and stabilization. It is formed based on the recommendation of the Secretary of State. The CRSG will oversee the strategic planning and execution of reconstruction programs specific to the country or conflict for which it is formed. The committee reports back to the Deputies Committee on the implementation of policy for the execution of programs and provides options for further United States government engagement.⁵

Taking the guidance provided by the concept of the Country Reconstruction and Stabilization Group, the United States Joint Forces Command, in conjunction with the Department of State issued J7 Pamphlet version 1.0, *US Government Draft Planning Framework for Reconstruction, Stabilization, and Conflict Transformation* in December 2005. This document presents a draft interagency planning process and provides a point of departure for future interagency cooperation during post-conflict periods and serves as a framework for integrated civilian and military planning.⁶ Just recently the Department of Defense issued a new directive which establishes policy for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) operations. The basic policy tenets that it establishes specifically address areas such as, rebuilding indigenous institutions, reviving or rebuilding the private sector, and the development of representative governmental institutions. It highlights the importance of military civilian teams which are critical to U.S. government stability operations. These teams' functions include ensuring security, developing the local governance structures, promoting bottom up economic activity, rebuilding infrastructure, and building an indigenous capacity for such tasks.⁷

As our military forces continue to become embroiled in conflicts around the world, our library of doctrine with respect post-conflict operations and nation building continues to grow. One of the tools to put this doctrine into practice is a joint civil military assistance team. This concept was founded on the program adopted by the Military Assistance Command – Vietnam (MACV), where during the Vietnam conflict these teams were designated as District Advisory Teams.⁸ The title Provincial Reconstruction Team was developed to describe this effort on-going in Afghanistan. It has since been adopted a similar efforts on going in Iraq.

Provincial Reconstruction Team Concept

The concept for the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) is quite straightforward. It is essentially the assembly of all concerned agencies who have an interest in the development of governance and reconstruction in a post-conflict environment. While various models have been developed, the essence of the skills a Provincial Reconstruction Team must contain is to provide comprehensive assistance for all aspects in the operation and development of a provincial governing body. The concept brings together all agencies which have resources dedicated for their specific mission. It entails a combination of military, government, tribal, religious, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) working together to achieve progress and a more stable and productive society for the population. The teams are comprised of not just soldiers, but include diplomats, policy development experts, rule of law experts, and those skilled in capacity and institutional development. When properly employed, they exert an extension of the United States mission commander's influence into the far-reaching corners of the nation in which they are deployed. They portray our concern for the welfare and prosperity of the affected population, as opposed to combat soldiers who are often viewed as occupiers.⁹ The challenges lie in the disparate views of the agencies involved. Many nongovernmental organizations avoid association with military units for a variety of reasons. In their view, the military units are an extension of a political goal and therefore biased in their approach. Most nongovernmental organizations are neutral to whatever conditions or political views have shaped the conflict requiring their presence. Secondly, in areas where security is questionable, association with military units can draw undue attention to nongovernmental organizations in the execution of their missions. Overt association may cause these NGOs to be targeted themselves. A provincial reconstruction team that is comprised from a variety of coalition and interagency organizations will provide NGOs the opportunity to interact with nonmilitary personnel. If the military element focuses on ensuring a secure environment from which to operate this will facilitate the interaction and coordination with nongovernmental organizations.¹⁰

Afghanistan Efforts

The program in Afghanistan has evolved over the past several years, beginning early in 2002, during Operation Enduring Freedom. Originally established as Coalition Humanitarian Liaison Cells which were referred to as "Chiclets", these small teams were staffed by military civil affairs soldiers. The teams were tasked to assess humanitarian needs, conduct small reconstruction projects, and establish a relationship with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).¹¹ Soon after their inception, Coalition Humanitarian Liaison Cells

became known as Joint Regional Teams (JRTs). This program would have three primary elements. Civil affairs teams made up the first component. These existed prior to the establishment of Joint Regional Teams and were the primary means for conducting Quick Impact Projects (QIPs). Civil-Military Operations Centers (CMOCs) formed the second element and provided a base of operations for the civil affairs teams to operate from and to gather and disseminate information. Finally, security forces provided by the coalition allowed all of the Joint Regional Teams to function safely throughout Afghanistan. In November 2002 President Karzai of Afghanistan personally requested the title be changed to provincial reconstruction teams. He commented, "Warlords rule regions; governors rule provinces."¹² He also felt that a strong reference to reconstruction should be emphasized. The initial environment from which PRTs developed was fluid and dynamic. And as a result, the mission and structure changed over time. Briefings given in November 2002 were very vague in describing the mission of the PRTs. Basic descriptions of the PRT mission included terms such as "monitor," "assist...coordinating bodies," and "facilitate cooperation." The general feeling was that the PRT should be observing and facilitating everything but not actually accomplishing anything specific.¹³ With little or no formal structure and a vague and nonspecific mission, the conditions were present for initial problems. This contributed to the friction between civilian and military personnel. Since the PRT was a military based organization with a military commander, the civilian component felt alienated. The fact that civilian agencies often sent junior personnel with little or no resources gave the military commanders cause for discouragement.¹⁴ Additionally, the initial PRT operations throughout the fall of 2002 were extremely controversial with the nongovernmental humanitarian agencies who felt strongly that military forces had no business conducting humanitarian assistance.¹⁵ This opposition can be summed up in six major points.

1. It violates the basic premise that aid must be provided in a neutral and impartial manner based solely on need and not be politicized.
2. It infringes upon missions traditionally occupied by the NGO community.
3. Soldiers conducting humanitarian aid blur the lines of distinction between combatants and noncombatants and place NGO personnel at greater risk.
4. It's duplicates efforts available and provided by international agencies.
5. Military forces do not have the inherent capacity for this type of work and any attempts create more harm than good.
6. It detracts the military from its primary responsibility of providing security.¹⁶

Fortunately, the PRTs would work through these initial growing pains.

By January 2003, the mission of PRTs would become better defined. Although it was still considered to be the eyes and ears of the senior commander on the ground, it had clear objectives which included: extending the authority of the central government beyond Kabul, monitoring and assessing developments within the regions, facilitating information-sharing, contributing to the reconstruction process, and closely coordinating with the United Nations Mission in Afghanistan, international associations, and nongovernmental organizations.¹⁷ To counter arguments from NGOs, the Department of Defense clearly stated that “a PRT is not, and has never pretended to be, a uniformed NGO, nor inexperienced construction or development agency.”¹⁸ By July 2004, that PRT structure had formed and there were ten PRTs across Afghanistan. The program continued to grow and in July 2005 there were a total of twenty PRTs with the U.S. leading thirteen of them. The structure in Figure 1 demonstrates the military centric nature of the PRTs in Afghanistan. The civilian section had a relatively minor role in coordinating with external agencies.

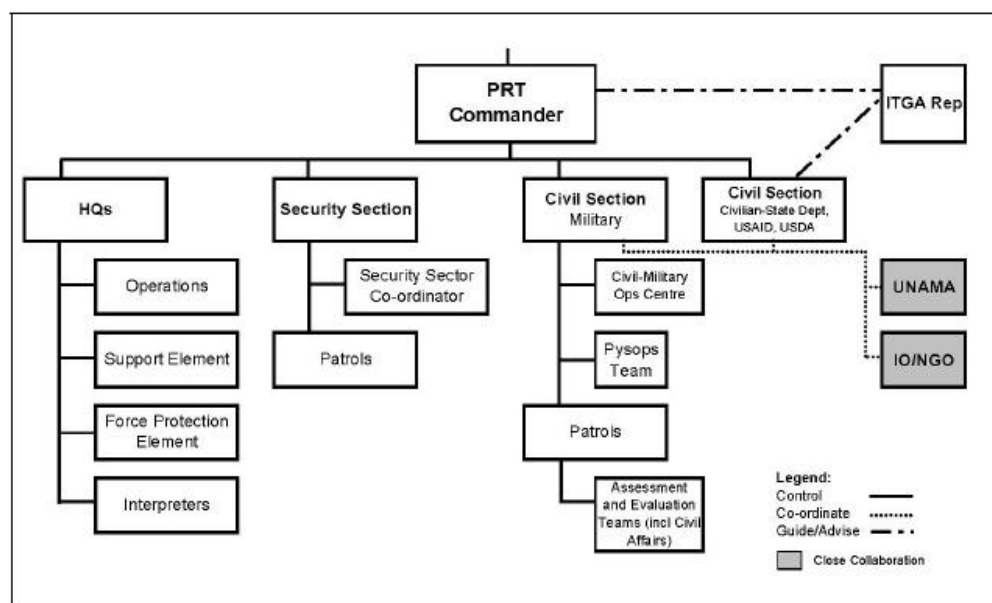


FIGURE 1. PRT STRUCTURE IN AFGHANISTAN

Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Iraq

In the spring of 2005, The U.S. Embassy in Iraq decided to model the ongoing efforts in Afghanistan and design something similar for the mission in Iraq. Months earlier, a military survey team had been dispatched to Afghanistan to collect information and lessons learned. The positive experience in Afghanistan encouraged the senior leadership to conclude that a similar program would be beneficial in Iraq.¹⁹ By April 2005, the concept began to take shape and was titled Provincial Support Teams (PST) in Iraq. The mission for these teams was agreed upon by both military and State Department leaders and remains unchanged today as:

“To assist Iraq’s provincial governments with developing a transparent and sustained capability to govern, promoting increased security and rule of law, promoting political and economic development, and providing the provincial administration necessary to meet the basic needs of the population.”²⁰

The initial program was a much smaller scaled version of the teams in Afghanistan. Teams averaged six to eight members, and most notably, each team was led by a State Department official usually from the Regional Embassy Office (regional coordinator) or the political adviser assigned to the military within that area (division POLAD). Additional members included a military deputy, a representative from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Iraqi Reconstruction Management Office (IRMO) field activity, unit combat engineer, unit civil affairs officer, and a representative from the Army major subordinate command (MSC) responsible for security in that province, usually a Brigade Combat Team. The initial concept provided the team in a strictly advisory role to Iraqi officials responsible for reconstruction at the provincial level.

In order to fully understand the process, one must first understand how reconstruction requirements were identified and funded through the Interim Iraqi Government (IIG). Iraq consists of eighteen provinces or governorates, similar to U.S. states. Each province elects a Provincial Council (PC) through an election process. The Provincial Council, in turn, appoints a provincial governor. As the ruling body for the province, the provincial council appoints various committees to perform functions on its behalf.²¹ For reconstruction matters the Provincial Council established Provincial Reconstruction and Development Committees. These committees were generally chaired by the governor and consisted of various members representing sectors such as water, electricity, housing, education, and other essential services. The members were usually the national ministry representatives for that province, known as Directors General (DG). For example, the Ministry of Electricity in Baghdad would appoint a

Director General to represent the Ministry of Electricity in each province. This Director General would live and work full time in that province and provide resources from the ministry to that province.²²

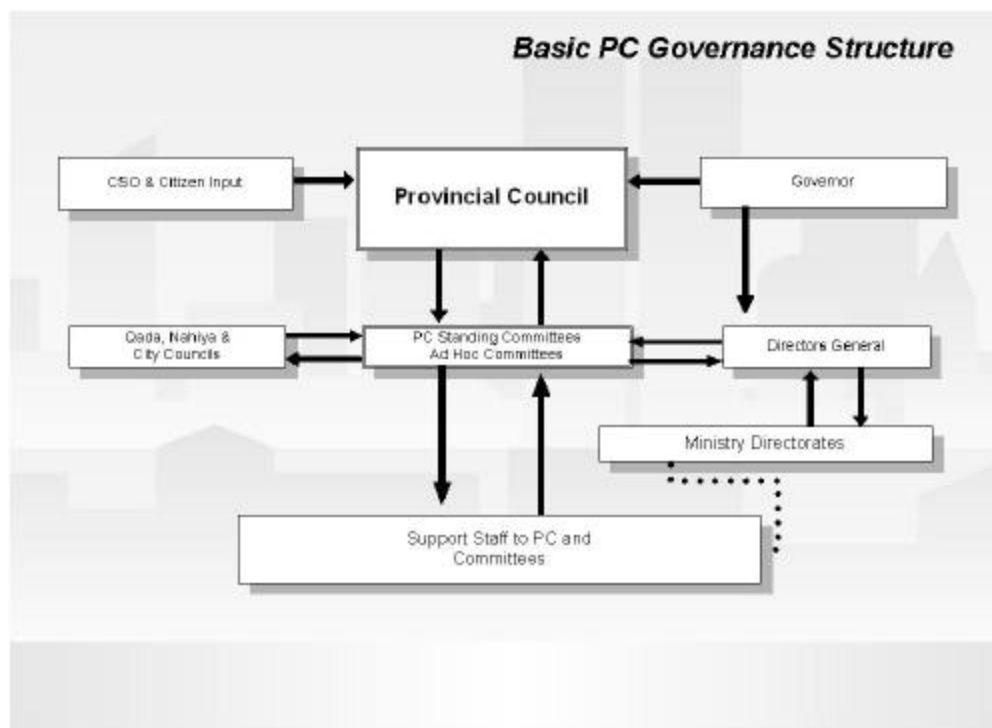


FIGURE 2. PROVINCIAL GOVERNANCE

For any given province the provincial reconstruction and development committee would consist of 35 to 40 members and meet in the provincial capital on a weekly basis. Once a month, the committee would report out to the Provincial Council on reconstruction projects that had been nominated and approved.

As the U.S. led Provincial Support Teams were formed, they were faced with the challenge of how to assist the Iraqi Provincial Reconstruction and Development Committees. With little or no resources to draw from, the provincial support teams would have difficulty convincing Iraqi officials that they were committed to the success of this program. Additionally, unit commanders across Iraq supported the program with a variety of degrees of enthusiasm. In many cases, members detailed to Provincial Support Teams performed these tasks as an additional duty. In May 2005, General Casey, Commanding General, Multi-National Forces-Iraq

(MNF-I), directed that \$80 million dollars of the Commanders Emergency Response Program be allocated to the Provincial Support Team program. These funds would come from the mid-year supplemental appropriation received in June 2005. Eight provinces of strategic value were selected to receive these funds. This initiative was accepted with enthusiasm by the Iraqi committees. The goal was to provide sufficient resources to selected provinces, which in turn would allow the Iraqi Provincial Reconstruction and Development Committees the ability to have a voice in reconstruction matters and set priorities for which projects would be initiated in their provinces. One drawback to this initiative resulted from the limitations on U.S. appropriated funds. Firstly, the projects had to comply with the Department of Defense regulations pertaining to the Commander's Emergency Response Program. This limited the committees on the types and dollar values of projects which could be initiated. Secondly, the supplemental appropriation received in June 2005 would expire at the end of September 2005. In order to complete year-end close out of funds, spending authority would have to be completed by the end of August. Any funds remaining at the end of August would be turned back for redistribution. This gave the committees only three months to nominate and design projects and ensure contract amounts were obligated. Although this was an ambitious endeavor, every Iraqi committee, with help from the Provincial Support Team, moved quickly and was able to expend the majority of the funds provided.

As the fiscal year drew to a close, a major revision of the program was conducted. The U.S. ambassador to Iraq, Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, had been recently appointed by President Bush. His previous appointment had been in Afghanistan. Therefore, he brought with him extensive experience with this type of assistance program. He directed that the program be modeled after the effort in Afghanistan, including changing the name to Provincial Reconstruction Teams. The structure of each team was greatly expanded. The goal was to design an organization that would be enduring over a long period of time, as the military footprint gradually shrunk across Iraq. For this reason, the team could operate over an extended period of time without regard to repositioning of coalition forces and eventual withdrawal of military units. The result was a nominal team shown in Figure 3 which could be slightly modified based upon the needs of the province in which it was deployed.

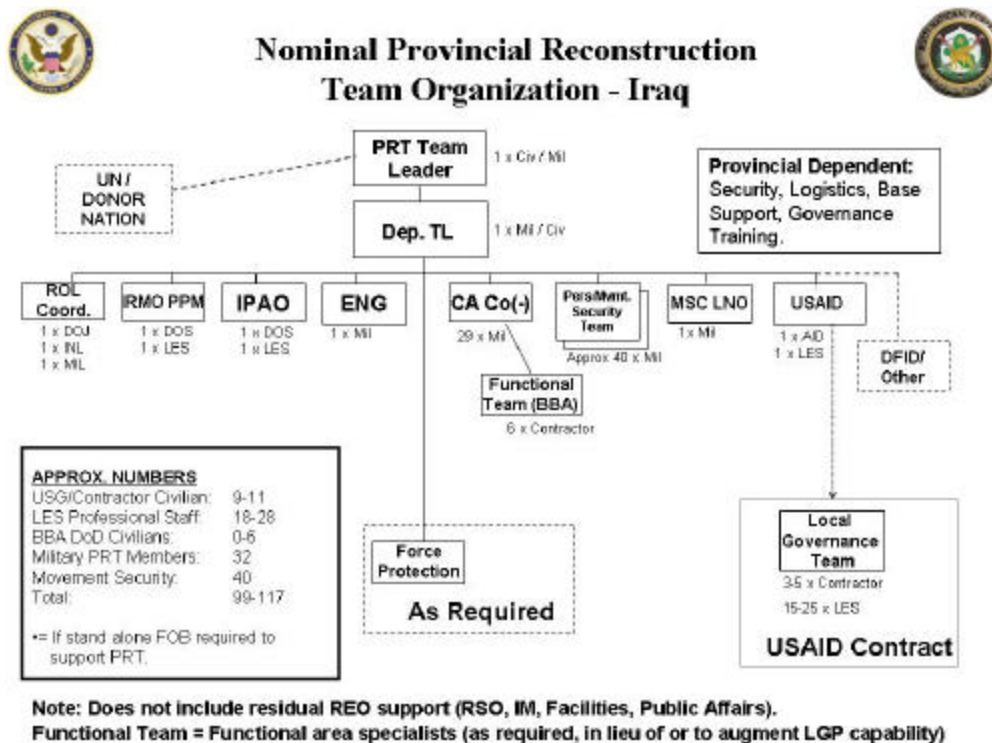


FIGURE 3. NOMINAL PRT STRUCTURE

It is important to note that this structure dramatically increased each PRT from a small team of six to eight personnel to a formal organization with a total of approximately 100 personnel. Each Provincial Reconstruction Team is headed by a Foreign Service Officer (FSO) from the Department of State. The deputy team leader will usually be a military officer in the rank of lieutenant colonel. The team organization brings together a variety of skills from numerous agencies. It includes representatives from the Department of Justice, Department of State, USAID, Department of Defense civilians who serve as Bi-cultural / Bi-lingual Advisers (BBA) and possesses the capability to include nongovernmental organizations as well as United Nations Mission in Iraq (UNAMI), and other coalition agencies such as the UK's Department For International Development (DFID). It also incorporates locally employed staff, (LES) who are qualified Iraqi civilians recruited to work for the PRT and interact with the provincial government offices. While some of these local employed staff will perform administrative tasks, USAID has

developed a comprehensive Local Governance Program (LGP) contract which will perform the task of institutional training to build sound practices within provincial government offices. The LGP program will be described in greater detail in another section. The bulk of the team's manpower comes from the Civil Affairs Company (-) which contains 29 military personnel and two personnel movement security teams which contain 40 military personnel each. The size and number of these movement security teams is dependent upon the location at which the PRT is based and the threat associated with that location. Also, options have been explored to contract this security element if needed. As significant military force reductions occur in the coming years, this option may be exercised. If we examine closely those individuals who actually perform key interaction with Iraqi governmental officials we see the number of personnel is much fewer. What is not shown here is the life support and force protection assets required to sustain this team. It is assumed that the team will live and operate from a secured forward operating base (FOB) which is controlled by either U.S. forces, coalition forces, or Iraqi security forces.

In November 2005, the first three of a planned sixteen provincial reconstruction teams were established in the provinces of Ninewa, Babil, and Kirkuk. These first three teams were established to validate the expanded structure and to identify all associated resources required. These teams were referred to as "proof of principle" PRTs and underwent an extensive assessment after their initial operating capability was achieved. A fourth PRT in Baghdad is currently standing up. The U.S. ambassador to Iraq, Zalmay Khalilzad, was quoted at the inaugural ceremony as saying, "of all the PRTs, the Baghdad one may be the most critical one yet to the accomplishment of our objective of a free and prosperous Iraq."²³

To manage and evaluate the PRT program, a National Coordination Team (NCT) office was established at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad. This office monitors daily operations and receives reports and assessments from each of the PRTs operating throughout Iraq. It also conducts formal assessments of the effectiveness of each PRT through a series of detailed metrics. As in the structure of each PRT, the NCT is led by a State Department official and his deputy is a military officer assigned from the Multi-National Forces-Iraq headquarters staff. This office reports to a joint executive steering committee which provides strategic oversight and formulates policy. A program similar to provincial reconstruction teams is also being conducted at the national level. Where a PRT interfaces with provincial governments, a ministerial assistance team (MAT) conducts capacity building along the same lines for the national government. A capacity development program, similar to LGP described earlier, is being

extended throughout all of the national ministries. Long-term plans call for a four year involvement; however military forces are only involved for the first two years.²⁴

Governance

Although provincial reconstruction teams may appear to be focused primarily on reconstruction as their title implies, perhaps the most important aspect of their contribution to long-term stability is in the area of governance. For many countries, such as Iraq, who have existed under dictatorial control for decades, democratic institutions and practices are not easily put into practice. The local governance program (LGP) which is funded and contracted by USAID targets two key areas for training municipal governments. The first area targets core competency skills which any bureaucratic organization must possess in order to operate. These include basic management techniques, organizational design, and sound business practices. The second area target specific functional skills that is unique to a specific ministry, such as electricity, water, or finance. The core LGP training team will conduct a series of training courses for all government offices both at the national and provincial levels. Functional LGP training teams will partner with their respective areas and spend up to several weeks evaluating and training personnel on specific technical skills.²⁵ This approach provides a combination of skills common to all Iraqi government employees as well as building depth in their technical ability. The new Iraq constitution attempts to balance the distinct local culture of Iraq with reforms that will accommodate both centralized power with regional and provincial demands. Articles 112-115 provide provisions which encourage any province to apply it to transform itself into a regional government. This increases the potential for provincial governments to strengthen their authority and change their jurisdiction. In this instance, the numbers of regional governments are very likely to increase.²⁶ This is already demonstrated in northern Iraq, where the three provinces of Dahuk, Arbil, and As Sulaymaniyah have formed the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG).²⁷ This provides greater autonomy for provinces which share commonality, while reducing the potential for the desire to create separate nations.

Lessons Learned

It is clear that the provincial reconstruction team concept has evolved significantly since it was first conceived in Afghanistan and early 2002. Since that time program has become more formal, structured, and productive. Several critical lessons have been learned that should be identified for future operations.

Afghanistan. First, before creating a new type of new organization, a clear structure and function for the organization must be developed. The concept in Afghanistan was quickly

accepted, but the execution became improvised initially until PRT structure and objectives were clearly defined. Secondly, experienced personnel must be placed into key PRT positions. While military forces can draw upon personnel with specific skills quickly, other government agencies such as the department of state or USAID cannot. Personnel from these organizations must be recruited and interviewed, which consumes more time. Third, any complex program which consumes resources must be evaluated. As such, specific metrics for performance must be developed and incorporated into the overall strategy. Developing measures of effectiveness are key to the programs overall success. Fourth, PRTs must coordinate more than just reconstruction projects. Teams in Afghanistan did very little coordination with government officials. Much of their focus was on Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) which, by their nature, tend to win the hearts and minds of the people. The need for rapid project completion often comes at the expense of long term system development. Many small disparate projects were accomplished but were not designed to be part of larger systems. For instance, schools were a favorite type of project, as they contribute to the education of children. But unless they are planned into a larger education system, they are merely buildings. As a result, minimal institutional capacity development has taken place.²⁸

Iraq. The PRT program in Iraq benefited greatly from lessons learned in Afghanistan. Many of the issues previously addressed were incorporated into the program development. However, the program in Iraq evolved through several iterations, just as the program in Afghanistan. It took the better part of a year for senior leaders to realize the need for a robust and structured organization which could accomplish the tasks required of it. Additionally, the Commander's Emergency Response Program provided funding to selected provinces in 2005. While this was done to reinforce the military campaign plan, it had an adverse effect on relations with the Iraqi government. Provinces that received funding were viewed as the "haves" and those provinces that did not receive funding saw themselves as the "have not's." Any type of funding provided for PRTs must be equitable across all provinces in order to avoid the perception of partiality. Another lesson highlights the fact that limitations on the recruitment of civilian personnel is hampering the creation of additional PRTs beyond the first four established. This underscores the need for advanced planning in anticipation of manpower requirements. And finally, there is still no clear link between the PRT interactions with provincial governments and coordination done at the national ministerial level. This link must be established in order to provide a consistent policy across the entire assistance effort. Figure 4 demonstrates the process currently under development.²⁹



Supporting Development Through Coordinated Action

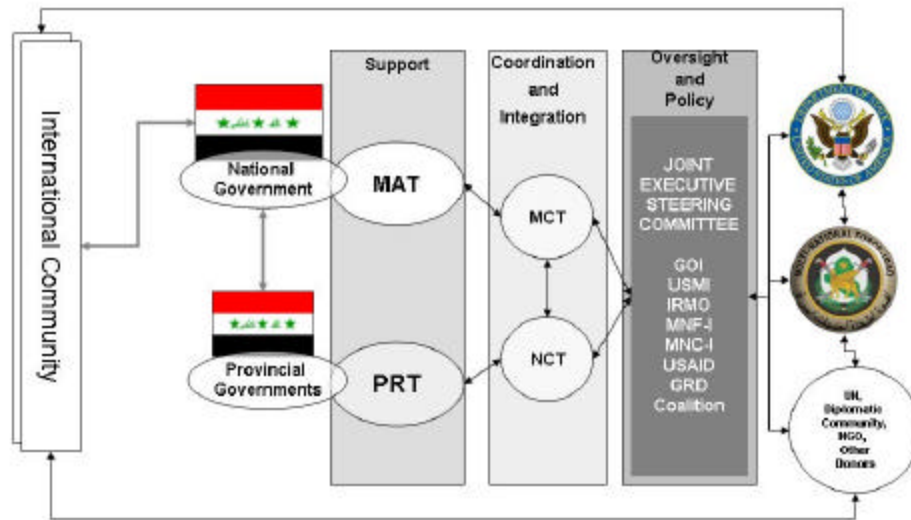


FIGURE 4. LINKING NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL EFFORTS

Recommendations

A lesson learned is, in reality, only observed until it is put into practice. Then it has been truly learned. Although we have made great progress toward establishing specific goals and objectives for our national endeavors abroad, we must continue to develop sound and consistent policy at the strategic level like the establishment of PRTs. National leaders continue to provide guidance in the forms of policy and directives. This allows the planners of all organizations throughout the interagency to anticipate requirements, define their role, and allocate resources accordingly. Secondly, there must be a designated lead agency for the reconstruction and capacity development phase of any operation. This will ensure a strong unity of effort and allow all supporting organizations to understand their roles, responsibilities, and resource requirements. Although it is understood that existing circumstances drive decisions, it would be beneficial if the lead agency was consistent from mission to mission. With this in mind, the Department of State is an ideal candidate to assume the lead for all post-conflict operations. This does not, however, absolve the military commander from having a significant role. The establishment and maintenance of a secure environment is essential for the success of all post-

conflict activities. Military forces also contain a variety of skills aside from those required for combat. And on a comparative scale, military personnel generally outnumber civilian agency employees within a combat zone. Therefore, the military component of any post-conflict operation will be the driving force to initiate many activities. Close coordination must be planned with whichever lead agency is designated. Finally, post-conflict operations must be fully resourced with both personnel and funding. Our national objectives may be firmly achieved by quickly establishing organizations, such as PRTs, immediately following combat operations, and providing them ample and flexible resources.

Conclusion

No mission that the U.S. government undertakes will be successful if the goals and objectives are not clearly defined and understood and the commitment to resource them is made in advance of execution. Clearly, the regime changes in Afghanistan and Iraq have required substantive resources to date. Perhaps the urgency of each situation warranted these missions to be undertaken without fully exploring all of the necessary aspects to complete the mission entirely. Or perhaps the assumptions made during planning did not anticipate the amount of prolonged resistance or the laborious task of reestablishing governments in the wake of combat operations. The concept of Provincial Reconstruction Teams has proven beneficial in both Afghanistan and Iraq. Although these programs encountered difficulty in their formation, they have since matured into structured programs which can be thoroughly evaluated for their effectiveness. Our national leaders have recognized the Provincial Reconstruction Team contribution to the overall success of completing the mission in each of these areas. Our nation must continue to resource these valuable programs in order to gain maximum long-term benefit from their efforts. The investment that we make will contribute to lasting democratic institutions in those countries, which in turn will create long-term stability and more prosperity for their people.

Endnotes

¹ Nina M. Serafino. *CRS Issue Brief for Congress, Peacekeeping and Related Stability Operations: Issues of U.S. Military Involvement*, The Library of Congress, October 4, 2004, p. 6.

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¹⁹ This section draws from the author's personal experience. The author was deployed to the staff of the Multi-National Forces-Iraq headquarters from January 2005 – December 2005.

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